

Acknowledgements

The *School-Home Links Reading Kit* was developed for teachers, families, and reading partners through the Compact for Reading Initiative, an activity of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education at the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of the *School-Home Links Reading Kit* is to encourage greater family, school, and community involvement in the education of children, and to improve their skills and achievements in reading and other language arts. The Kit is organized around a skills framework provided in the National Academy of Sciences' report, *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, and a reading framework developed by Edward Kame'enui and Deborah Simmons of the University of Oregon. Each reading skill activity has been aligned to a Maryland State Reading Standard.

Teams of teachers at the kindergarten through third-grade levels developed the *School-Home Links Reading Kit*. One team coordinated by Mary Russo and Jonna Casey of the Boston Annenberg Challenge included Margaret Sands, Kathleen Baron, and Crystal English of the Mason School in Boston. Another team coordinated by Ellie Topolovac, superintendent of Solana Beach School District in California, included Susana Baum, Janet Brice, Jamie Crowley, Rhona Grant, Deborah Hays, Cristy Maxcy, Marla Sammulu, David Topolovac, and Patricia Totina. Selected activities were adapted or reprinted with permission from *How to Tutor Your Child in Reading and Writing* (1998), published by the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Clearinghouse on Reading English and Communication at Indiana University and the Family Learning Association, and *Spelling By Writing* (1998) by Carl Smith, published by ERIC and the Family Learning Association. Shira Herman, Alex Campbell, Sandra Richardson, and Azalea Saunders provided editing and formatting assistance. Alan Ginsburg and Susan Thompson-Hoffman coordinated the overall effort. These materials were extensively reviewed by teams of parents, teachers, and administrators and by participants at the 1998 Improving America's Schools Act and Title 1 Parents' Conferences. The McFarland & Associates education consultant firm (Drs. Brenda J. Green, Barbara Milton, and Mr. Larry Haworth) worked on and assigned the Maryland Standards to each activity with consultation from the Maryland State Department of Education's Reading Specialist (Ms. Michele Goady).

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INTRODUCTION

A Word to Families and Tutors About the Use of the School-Home Links Activities

Research tells us that when family members work with their child on school work and become involved in their child's school, their child is more likely to succeed in school. Whether you are a family member, extended family member, or a learning partner/ tutor, working with your child to support work done at school can make a real difference!

The School-Home Links activities provided in this kit are keyed directly to reading activities that teachers typically do with children in school. These activities are directly linked to the Maryland State Reading Standards. These School-Home Links provide your family with an extra opportunity for more learning at home.

The School-Home Links are intended to be family activities. Your child will need your support in completing these activities. Most of the activities are not meant to be done alone. Remember that every child learns at his or her own speed, and most children learn within three-year developmental periods. Some children acquire the skills of a developmental period early, others will take longer and may need to work harder. This means your child may find the School-Home Links very easy, or on grade level, or difficult, depending upon your child's rate of growth. Wherever your child is, when you work with your child daily on the School-Home Links and similar reading activities, you can help your child grow steadily in reading and improve important skills.

Here are some tips for working on the School-Home Links activities:

- Start each School-Home Links activity time by reading the boxed note to you from the teacher, starting "Dear Family." This note tells you what your child is learning in school if your child's teacher sends the activity home, and the purpose of doing the School-Home Links activity at home.
- Next read the directions for the activity. If the directions are addressed to you, work with your child on the School-Home Links as suggested. If the directions are written to your child, read them out loud to your child, unless your child can read them alone. After all, the more practice your child gets reading, the better a reader your child will be.
- If you or your child would like extra support, ask your child's teacher to work with your child in school and also assign a learning partner or tutor who can meet regularly with your child after school. There are many community organizations, such as your local library, that can provide tutors.
- Provide any comments you may have about your child's reading work or work on the

Home Links at the bottom or back of the School-Home Links. This information can help your child's teacher adjust the level of the Home Links or provide in-school help to better meet your child's needs.

- Each School-Home Links activity ends with a space for your child to sign the page, showing he or she has worked on the activity, and a space for you to sign the page, showing that you have worked with your child on the activity.
- Finally, the time you spend helping your child to read and write now is a gift for a life time!
Reading is the foundation for all other knowledge!

Home-Link Activity Locator

Kindergarten

Each discipline in Maryland has a state-mandated framework required by law, and the Home-Links Activities comply with the English Language Arts curricula framework. This framework is known as the Maryland State Standards, and the Home-Link Activities are identified with the Reading guidelines. Thus, each exercise in the Home-Links Activities relates to a **Maryland State Reading Standard**. A **Maryland State Reading Standard** will be found at the bottom of each activity page. The English Language Arts includes four processes, which are: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These four process areas have two contents: language and literature. All six of these areas have been utilized throughout the exercises in this document. The numbering that you will see at the bottom of the page identifies the appropriate **Maryland State Reading Standard**. For example, what you will see is a number like:

K-3/1.3.1.6

which can be understood as follows:

K-3/ 1.3.1 .6

K-3/

Indicates that the activity relates to grades K through 3 and by the end of grade 3, students know and are able to do the activity

1.3.5

Identifies the standard
“Comprehension and Interpretation of Informational Text”

.3

Indicates that the student can
“relate prior knowledge and experience to literal and inferential information found in text (MLO.R.1.3.3).”

As a result of the Reading Standards, the Maryland Department of Education established Maryland Learning Outcomes (MLO) that serve as the bases for Maryland school performance assessment at grades 3, 5, and 8. Together, the reading Standards and Maryland Learning Outcomes clearly define for the Maryland community what students must know about the reading in Kindergarten through Third grade.

We have established a Home-Link Activity Locator to assist teachers, parents, and tutors to identify which activity relates directly to a Maryland State Reading Standard and Maryland Learning Outcome. We hope this activity locator will provide you with immediate access to a standard that you may desire to assign an activity.